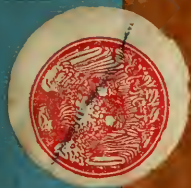


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**JIMMY-BOY
RECRUIT**

AND OTHER VERSES

COLTON



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JIMMY-BOY RECRUIT

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JIMMY-BOY RECRUIT

AND OTHER VERSES

BY
JOSEPH K. COLTON

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no 1

To the Memory
of
My Father



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JIMMY-BOY RECRUIT
AND OTHER VERSES



JIMMY-BOY, RECRUIT

*O Baker Street is lonesome and Baker Street is sad,
And Baker Street is sighing for the best old pal it had,
But Baker Street is holding up its head against the sky
And Baker Street is justly proud—and I can tell you why!*

He's back in town, he's home again, our Jimmy-boy recruit,
He gave his old civilians for a nifty khaki suit,
They took his measurements and then they gave him their
"O. K."

And he came back to tell me all about it yesterday.

O Jimmy-boy is young in years and Jimmy-boy is gay,
And many a night he's frolicked and danced the hours away,
And many a little lady he blarneyed with will cry
When he goes down the avenue and waves a brave goodbye!

He talked about the coming of the time to muster in,
He knew what he was facing and he wore a cheerful grin,
He joked about enlisting and the fright he gave his dad
When he went home in uniform—the only son they had!
And when their talk was finished and the folks had gone to bed
And shadows crept around the door and in the darkness fled,
While Jimmy-boy lay dreaming of the things that were to be,
The glory of his country and his part to keep it free,
His mother, in the next room, wide awake, could hear the roll
Of mighty drums of Freedom—and she prayed for Jimmy's soul.

Then morning came and breakfast and parting time at last
And Jimmy-boy shook hands with Dad, who held his fingers
fast,

Who looked into his youngster's eyes and gripped his shoulder
hard,

Just like a man would do to one who'd been a loyal pard!
And curly-headed sister—she was much too small to know
That Jimmy-boy had heard the call—and Jimmy-boy must go!

Then Jimmy kissed his mother, who clung to him and cried,
And slowly wiped away the tears to look at him with pride.
And all the anguish in her heart seemed vanished then and there,
Her Jimmy-boy was first to go—and first to do his share!

*O Baker Street is lonesome and Baker Street is sad,
And Baker Street is sighing for the dearest pal it had,
But Baker Street is holding up its head against the sky,
And Jimmy-boy, Enlisted Man! He is the reason why!*

LIEUTENANT FOGARTY

It's Lieutenant Fogarty now!

Then give him good luck, say I!

He's found his right place with the fighting race
Out under the Plattsburg sky.

It's Lieutenant Fogarty now.

The regular army—wow!

Then ho for his pep and his stiff proud step,
It's Lieutenant Fogarty now!

It's Lieutenant Fogarty now!

A credit to all, say I!

He'll soon have his chance in the trenches
of France,

And then watch the Germans fly!

His typewriter's covered with dust,

He's out of the routine and row,

He's in the elect and he's got our respect,
Has Lieutenant Fogarty now!

It's Lieutenant Fogarty now!

Born to the battle, say I!

He's doing his bit and he never will quit
When bullets are breezing by!

It's Lieutenant Fogarty now,

He's making his army bow!

Then here's a good word for a man from
the herd,

It's Lieutenant Fogarty now!

HIS CHOICE OF COLORS

To-morrow! Sure, 'tis Patrick's day,
Ah, then will I be wearin'
A precious bit of green upon the lapel of me coat!
An' through the street, me bucko!
I'll proudly go a-farin',
A smile upon me face but O! a gulpin' in me throat!

'Tis true I'm gettin' older,
God knows the time is flyin'.
The children they be growin' and leavin' us alone;
An' I sit here, the wife beside,
An' watch the evenin' dyin',
A-dreamin' of the old days when I rambled in Tyrone!

The old days, the bold days! when I was one-and-twenty,
'Twas many a merry shindig I favored with me fist!
And pretty colleens, bless 'em! they winked at me a-plenty,
With eyes as bright as star mites that pierce the twilight mist!
And o'er the hills of Tyrone I walked come dawn of Sunday,
The nine miles to mass I whistled with a will.
An' off to the verdant fields I carried of a Monday,
The kind Father's words—that linger with me still!
'Twas he who gravely cautioned when anger would beset me,
Who gave me his counsel and told me for to go!
An' in the blessed free land, nor bitter foes to fret me,
I've followed his teachings—and wish that he could know!

To-morrow! Sure, 'tis Patrick's day,
An' then will I be wearin'
A precious bit of green upon the lapel of me coat.
An' with the leaf I'll have—faith,
I hope you'll all be starin'—
The red and white and blue—to stop the gulpin' in me throat!

DAD'S BEST GIFT

I got a brand new briarwood pipe for Christmas, and a gun,
And many other welcome gifts to help along the fun;
And while I'm glad to get them all, from smoking set to stool,
The thing that pleased me most was that my boy was home
from school!

I've worked my hands with earnest zeal, through years of pain
and stress,
And tried to start him off aright, so far with some success;
His mother's saved and pinched and starved, and taught the
Golden Rule,
And just like me, she's happiest when that boy's home from
school!

He chats about his college, his teachers and his work;
He's not the kind to loaf around, to grumble or to shirk.
He doesn't waste his time on cards, or playing kelly pool,
He always stays with ma and me—my boy who's home from
school!

He walks into the kitchen when his ma is cooking things;
He tells her funny stories and jokes with her, and sings.
He cribs a cookie from the jar before it starts to cool,
And then he steals a hug and kiss—that boy who's home from
school!

And when he packs his grip and says goodbye to her and me,
It seems that half the joy of life goes, too, as company,
And all that makes the game worth while, and lets me wield a
tool,
Is knowing that he'll soon be back—our boy who's off to school!

Take all the gifts away from me, and spare me ma and health,
And if you leave my lad with me I will not ask for wealth!
I will not seek for high esteem, nor pray for power to rule,
If I may have, each holiday, my boy, back home from school!

TO RILEY

O still the gardens bloom for us,
And still the fairies dance,
Upon the moon-lit greensward we
May see them, if we glance.
The little boys who run away
Trudge bravely on the road,
They do not fear a meeting with
The vicious hoppy-toad!
In country kitchens orphans sweep,
And in the dusk of night,
They still will tell the tales about
The gobble-uns that bite!
And big black things that listen close
To everything that's said,
And creep upon the naughty child
When he is put to bed!
Neat cottages we still may find
Where two contented live,
With life and love and cheerfulness
And little else to give,
And up above the sun still shines,
The sky is just as blue—
Yet O how brighter is the world
For men the likes of you!

THE THIRD OFFICER

There's a liner clearing the harbor, pointing her nose to sea,
And there's a lad aboard her who's taken his leave of me.
Gone with a hearty hand-shake, eager to find his place,
Under the towering funnels out where the sea birds race.

Passing the channel lighthouse, flinging behind its smoke,
The ship is leaving the passage and now is beginning to poke
Its way through the mists of ocean, deep into the steamer lane,
Trusting that God will pilot her safely to port again!

Lured to the mast and chart house, knowing the vessel's wheel
As you and I know the sidewalk under our well-shod heel,
Loving the blue of the waters, the white of the flying spray,
Charlie would be a sailor, and Charlie has had his way.

He said "So long" to his dad and laughed at his mother's fears,
And sped to his duty man-like, nor waiting the sound of cheers,
Modest and brave and willing and giving the best he can,
Only a boy to his people, but to me, a whale of a man!

DRAFTED

He closed his cobbler shop last night,
He's left his stool to go and fight,
Joe Petrobon'!

Customers came to say good-by,
Each with a soft light in his eye,
Some with a smile, the rest a sigh,
Joe Petrobon'!

He felt so queer when he was drawn!
He is not built of husk and brawn,
Joe Petrobon'!

To leave the little corner shop,
Business and pleasure, friends to drop—
Ah, yes, he found it hard to stop!
Joe Petrobon'!

And yet, now when it's time to start
We find him set to do his part,
Joe Petrobon'!

Italia's skies, they say, are blue,
Under them hearts grow strong and true,
They give us loyal lads like you,
Joe Petrobon'!

He closed his cobbler shop last night,
Locked is the place, the windows tight,
Joe Petrobon'!

His sign still hangs above the door,
He'll find it there, just as before,
When home again he comes from war,
Joe Petrobon'!

THE COMFORTER

The south wind comes shyly and whispers of Spring,
I open the window to greet her;
I feel her light touch on my cheek and I fling
Off all of my troubles to meet her.
She bids me walk over the road and the hill
To a little brook hurdling the hollow—
Forgotten the office, the street and the till,
As, eagerly nodding, I follow!

The south wind comes softly, at morning and eve,
And sweet is the comfort she carries;
She will not allow me to sigh or to grieve,
But brightens each thought as she tarries!
I welcome her gladly, as one would a friend
Whose loyalty time cannot sever;
I'd have her remain through the years, without end,
And blow me her brightness forever!

YOUR LOSS—AND MINE

It's when a fellow goes away you miss him most of all,
Sometimes you hardly notice him if he's within your call,
You like him and you know he's here and now and then you
chat,

You buy a smoke, exchange a word, and let it go at that,
Sometimes you nod, just barely speak, and even scowl!—but say
Your view is altogether changed when that chap goes away.

It's when a friend has left the flock that things are not the same,
You join a group and listen close when some one calls his name,
It matters not how far he's gone, or where his fancy leads,
You want to hear that he is well, you hope for worthy deeds,
Day after day you feel your loss and you cannot refrain
From wishing that a kindly Fate would send him back again.

Last night I heard that one had sailed, bound over seas to give
His services that men in need might have a chance to live,
Perhaps the same stars I have seen looked down upon his ship
And flashed to him my wishes for a safe and pleasant trip.

Back home you will hold musicales, occasionally you'll dance,
The young will patter down the path of brief but sweet ro-
mance,
The old town hall will sway with song and drums will swell the
din,

But most of you will miss his smile and all—his violin!

THE SAD STRANGER

He was a stranger and his nose
Was redder than the rose that grows
In June gardens! Sunday was the day,
When gentle folk went forth to pray.
I watched them, noting how they dressed,
All in their rags de joie—their very best;
Their happy faces shining as they filed.
They looked about, were satisfied, and smiled.
A genial lot! Wrapped in the sweet content
Of loving life! No worries over rent,
No fears that on the morrow there would come
The landlord and his like, to make them glum!
Let butchers knock outside the kitchen door
And grocers fling their bills upon the floor!
They'd pay them all! They were supremely glad!
The stranger gazed—yet stayed subdued and sad!
I pondered. Why, with all this sunshine near
Does this man stay morose? And when a tear
Rolled down a bristly cheek and fell
Into the snow, methought he was not well!
The deep, fraternal love within my breast
Then spurred me on, I tapped him on the chest.
"Brother," said I, "Come, why the weeps and woe,
When all about you grins and gladness go?
Why do you sob when rays of sun descend
To bathe the streets in glory, end on end?"
A painful moment then! He slowly turned

His bleary, beady eyes wherein there burned
The deep desire of a mind distrait,
That wandering on, had blundered to its fate!
He moved his lips, a dull voice struggled through,
And lo! The reason came why he was blue;
Why he drooped there, an object weak and wan!
O dreadful day! The lid, the lid, was on!

He sobbed anew! The wind blew o'er the street,
Rocking his thirsty frame from head to feet,
I pressed his hand in pity, said goodbye
And went my way, a tear-drop in my eye!

A DIVIDEND

It's funny how much sunshine a little check can bring!
It brightens up the byways to our hearts and makes us sing,
Just a narrow slip of paper, with a few words writ thereon,
But O! it is the fairest that our eyes may look upon!
The frowns that may have gathered, with the fears we often
face,
All vanish when we see it and bright smiles beam in their place,
And the troubles that pursued us through the channels of the
night
Turn about and flee in terror when the slip sails into sight!
Then we find ourselves encircled by a rosy ring of joy,
Like a laddie with his first love or a baby with a toy!
All the gladsome, golden glamor of a world that's full of bliss
Envelopes us completely when we get a gift like this!

Not that I care much for money! Though it's nice to have
around,
Yet it doesn't form the framework for most happiness, I've
found!
Give me just a share for living and another bit for books,
And let me have a little time to follow buds and brooks,
And you may have the pageantry and wonderment of wealth,
While I will find contentment in simplicity and health!
For the little slip of paper they have given me today,
Brings home to me a message in a most impressive way,
It's to do one's work sincerely and to do one's level best,
And the One who watches o'er us will look after all the rest!

APRIL

April's jus' the month fer me, though ol' Winter's finger
In the hill-side brooks, once dipped, tries right smart to linger,
Temperchure goes skippin' up, warm rain comes a-skelter.
My' ol' April's touch is sweet! You know! Ain't ye felt 'er?

April's jus' the month for me! Thirty days of gladness,
Meanest man don't have much chance planning acts of badness,
Buds a-burstin' on the trees, promisin' a summer
Full of honey, birds and bees, like as not a hummer!

April's jus' the month fer me, then the law is leenyent,
Says "Get all the trout ye want." Wal, it's mos' conveyent!
Makes no differunce to me if there's work a-pilin',
Can't sit idly by and see troutin' days a-spilin'!

April's jus' the month fer me, jus' the same for Sandy,
Got a whole new outfit now, rod's sure a jim-dandy!
Didn't cost a great deal, but had to quit my smokin'
So as I could get the cash—had to stand sum jokin'!

April's jus' the month fer me! Where the best stream's flowin'
Me and Sandy, Sandy's boss, that's where we're a-goin';
Tackle, rubber boots an' all's ready for the mornin',
We'll be off and 'cross the hill 'fore the day's a-bornin'!

MESSAGE OF THE SHAMROCK

Dear little sprig of shamrock,
So wholesome, fresh and green,
You bring to me the fairyland
That I have never seen;
The fairyland where silver
The rivers are, that run
Through pleasant emerald valleys
Beneath a smiling sun!

My own folks! How they loved it!
When twilight dropped its fold,
They gathered in the living room
To tell the tales of old;
The stories of the fairies
That filled us with delight,
Or of the moaning banshee
That turned our glee to fright!

Along this magic twilight road
From out the dim-lit past
Came proudly Erin's famous men,
Brave-hearted to the last!
I heard them mock the tyrant's word
I saw them fight—and fall!—
And underneath beloved sod
They 'wait the final call.

No longer, in the gloaming,
I listen to the tales,
For they who sang the old songs
Have passed to other Vales.
But still, within me, I can feel
The spirit bid me go,
And wander where, on sacred earth
St. Patrick's shamrocks grow!

Dear little sprig of shamrock,
So wholesome, fresh and green,
You bring to me the fairyland
That I have never seen;
The fairyland where silver
The rivers are, that run
Through pleasant, emerald valleys
Beneath a smiling sun!

A CHRISTMAS WISH

Five dollars for Christmas!
A wonderful sum!
Enough to buy soldier suits,
Swords and a drum!
Enough to bring comfort,
Excitement and joy,
Through long winter months
To any small boy!

Five dollars for Christmas!
When I was quite small,
I seldom was noticed
By Santa, at all!
I used to hang stockings
Behind little stoves,
Expecting at morning
To find gifts in droves!

Five dollars for Christmas!
Then, what would it buy?
To my childish mind,
All things under the sky!
The door of my castle
Of dreams opened wide,
For the bills were the key
To the glories inside!

Five dollars for Christmas
I never received!
And sometimes I smiled,
But more often I grieved;
For it's hard to be poor,
And much harder it seems,
When one is inclined to
Be faithful to dreams!

Five dollars for Christmas!
I'd like to go back
For one Christmas eve,
To a weather-worn shack,
I'd like to creep up
The uncarpeted stairs,
And leave a crisp bill
For a boy unawares!

THANKS TO ABE

Our country's overflowing with the best there is in life,
Thanks to Abe.

It's free from brute oppression and wrong fraternal strife,
Thanks to Abe.

We go about our daily tasks, an independent race,
The labor of a free-man, right cheerfully we face,
An autocrat's command to us would be much out of place,
Thanks to Abe!

We know the Declaration was drawn up for every man,
Thanks to Abe.

The sun, the birds, the flowers all are here for every clan,
Thanks to Abe.

The roads that ramble through the woods we all may gaily
stroll,
Nor fear forbidding orders, nor pay unreasonable toll,
And go our way in happiness until we reach our goal,
Thanks to Abe!

The children learn in school today the love of liberty,
Thanks to Abe.

They know God chose this country for a stronghold of the free,
Thanks to Abe.

They know the men before him each gave loyal heart and hand,
To unify our people and to make us great and grand
Among the nations of the world—and there today we stand!
Thanks to Abe!

Old Glory ripples proudly in the breezes up above,

Thanks to Abe.

And none may view its flowing folds without a thrill of love,

Thanks to Abe.

He's gone to his reward, where he has found the peace and rest

The Lord denied him here on earth, his name forever blessed!

So with the millions, I today have gratefully expressed

Thanks to Abe!

A VALENTINE

She rummaged through a trunk and found
A quaint familiar Valentine,
Of lace-work made, and bordered round
With cupid shapes and hearts divine,
'Twas covered with the dust of years,
Turned partly yellow from its age,
But through a filmy veil of tears
She read the message on its page:

"I send you this in blissful hope
That in the darkness I may grope
No longer. Love, this Valentine
I send, to ask you to be mine,
I seek no more from Him above,
Just you alone, and all your love!"

A little lady, grown quite gray,
A bit old-fashioned, if you please,
Finding the path to yesterday
In that dim attic on her knees,
Her secret I will share with you,
Because it tells a story sweet
Of lovers twain forever true,
Dear ones whom you'd delight to meet.

The precious token tightly held,
In wrinkled hands that trembled so
Was but an instrument to weld
The present with the long ago.
We must forgive her if she cried,
For in that musty, cob-webbed room
The ghosts of by-gone days abide
And haunt the chamber nooks in gloom!

How long she dreamed I cannot tell,
But supper came and she was missed,
And Grand-Dad worried quite a spell
Until they found her, and she kissed
His fears away. And in his hand
She placed the crumbling Valentine.
God grant a gift as pure and grand
May some day come to thee and thine!

"I send you this in blissful hope
That in the darkness I may grope
No longer. Love, this Valentine
I send, to ask you to be mine.
I seek no more, from Him above,
Just you alone, and all your love!"

WAKE UP WITH SAMUEL

Samuel Speed was free and easy everywhere he went,
Right and left his hard-earned money Sammy gaily spent,
Auto parties hither, thither, down to Boston town,
Sammy led the joyful riders, doing things up brown.
Every week-end found him answering Dissipation's call,
Baseball, bowling, pool and poker—Samuel tried them all,
Once a month he made a winning—yet when all is said,
Monday morning found him yearning for the cash that fled.
Rainy days gave him no worry, let 'em come, said he,
They will disappear as quickly, I'll go on a spree.
Thus he used his leisure hours, fearing not the day
When old age his steps would hinder, and his hair grow gray.

Sprinting off to work one morning, Samuel saw a friend
In whom all the season's glories fitly seemed to blend,
Long ago had Sammy spied her, long ago he'd tried
To convince her that she really ought to be his bride.
Common sense ruled this fair maiden, she was wise and knew
All about the young man's habits—and she told him, too,
Told him he must change his methods, walk a different track,
When he did, why then perhaps—perhaps—she'd take him
back!

Sammy bought a paper mornings at the corner stand,
So he knew about the trouble with the Kaiserland,
Fellows that he knew and chummed with, full of life and fun,
All had swapped the roof-tree's comforts for a tent and gun,
They had heard what Sammy ignored—heard the call to serve,
They had patriotic impulse, courage, faith and nerve!

Venturous, yet guided chiefly by the sense of right
Toward relief of human suffering, they had gone to fight.
Prolonged pleasures and privations mentally they weighed,
And deciding, faced the future, flushed, but unafraid,
Not for them the tinkling glasses or the clicking balls
On the billiard table rolling—when Old Glory calls!

Sammy read about their going with a troubled mind,
And it stirred within a feeling, queer but undefined,
For each day brought new departures, hand-shakes, smiles and
tears,

While the Army and the Navy claimed the chums of years.
From the corner and the club-room, from the gay cafes
All his intimates were missing—wooed to other ways.
Parties, yes, but mostly strangers, scarce a soul he knew,
And he heard no shouts to "Join us!" as he wandered through.

So it went, until the day came Samuel Speed awoke,
And all records of recruiting speedily he broke,
People gawped in great amazement as he sped along,
Earnestness upon his features, in his heart a song.
So he signed enlistment papers—he will do his bit—
You, who cannot, will not, follow—you must make his kit!

You can save and you can spare it, you **MUST** find a way,
If it be but fifty dollars bring it forth **TODAY!**
Be not guided by another, think now for yourself,
Take the little hoard of savings from the kitchen shelf,
For the town and state and country, for your own great pride,
All this selfish thought of interest swiftly cast aside!
Be a loyal man, or woman! Grateful? Show it, please!
It's the quickest way of bringing Wilhelm to his knees,
It's the surest way of keeping Liberty aflame,
Buy a bond Today! Tomorrow! or bow down in shame!

SPUTTERINGS IN SPRING

A is for April,
Now tearful, now pert;
Then father gets busy
And digs in the dirt.

B is for Babies,
Whose cheeks grow so red
When wheeled in the sunshine
The springtime has spread.

C is for water carts,
Sprinkling the dust,
So apt to sail lightly
With each passing gust.

D is for "Divvles"
Who live on our street,
Our garden is tracked
By the print of their feet.

E is for Errands
That Johnny must do
Before he is learning
To add two and two.

F is for Flowers
Of various kinds,
They soften our sorrows
And brighten our minds.

G is for going
The alphabet through.
Let this be a warning
Dear reader, to you.

H is for Hitting
A ball on the "nose;"
The harder Cobb hits it,
The farther it goes.

I is for Injuns.
As a usual thing,
A redskin has little
In common with spring.

J is for Jitney,
A humble machine,
Yet I can't have any—
I haven't a bean.

K is for Kissing.
Fond lovers stroll out
And act as if none
But themselves were about.

L is for Laughter,
Sweet music and song.
When April came tripping
She brought them along.

M is for Mud
You'll find on the feet
Of Hubby or Bubbie
Just in from the street.

N is for Neighbors,
Some good, and—some bad. . .
Just let them alone
And you'll never be sad.

O is for Onions,
Which, heaped on a steak,
Are bully to eat, but
Your tummy will ache!

P is for Picking
New suits for yourself,
While the old winter raiment
Is tossed on the shelf.

Q is for Quarrel,
Oh, unhappy noun!
It's easy to start one
In any old town.

R is for tu-R-nips,
And car-R-R-ots as well.
How I can arrange this
I never shall tell.

S is for Straying
To favorite brooks,
And luring the trout
From their watery nooks.

T is for Tess's
New bonnet of straw.
Even girl friends admit
That it hasn't a flaw.

U is for Under
The sod with the seeds,
The pansy will shortly
Be mingling with weeds.

V is for Violets,
Hid in the wood.
We gathered them when
We were little and good.

W, friend,
Is a letter we hate,
And so we abandon it
Now to its fate.

X is for X,
They use it sometimes
In photos and scenes
Of desperate crimes.

Y is for You,
And also for Yet,
We're nearing the close
Of the allafabet.

Z is for Zizz,
Gee-whiz-Z-es and such.
Now tell us the truth,
Have we wearied you much?

HER SOLACE

Somewhere in the Southland,
Snatching your respite,
Soldier in your slumber,
Do you dream to-night?
What then are you dreaming,
Of dread war's decree?
Or the day when proudly
You'll come back to me?

Yesterday you left me
And I let you go,
While the heart within me
Pulsed and pounded so!
But I would not stay you,
Would not have you lag,
When your country called you,
Called you to the flag!

Far above are wondrous
Beauties in the sky,
But I cannot view them,
Soldier, if I try;
I can only see you
Marching down the street,
And my poor heart trampled
Underneath your feet!

Sitting in the shadows
I cannot repress
Tears of tender mixture,
Caused by your caress;
Was it war we needed
Now to point the way,
Out of tiny troubles
Toward a brighter day?

All the childish quarrels,
All the pride and pain
Of the past have vanished,
They'll not come again!
And the knowledge cheers me,
Gives me strength to bear
What the future offers
For I know you care!

A VISIT FROM UNCLE SAM

I dreamed that Uncle Sam was flesh, that in his spangled clothes,
He came to visit me last night—that straightway I arose
To bid him welcome and to pay the homage that was due
Such a distinguished visitor, and I was trembling, too,
Please do not think I was afraid—I love him far too much—
’Twas just because he thrilled me with his nearness and his
touch.

I gave him some refreshments, then we sat and talked awhile,
And above those queer chin whiskers he displayed the tend’rest
smile,
And told the brightest stories and he sang the sweetest songs—
But the tenderness all vanished when I spoke of Belgian wrongs
And there was no more of laughter and the melody was lost
When we discussed the misery that the Kaiser’s war had cost.

He told me how he’d suffered with the men on alien sod,
How he had wished to help them and had asked a way of God,
He reflected on our portion and the burdens we must bear
In the struggle for humanity—I saw his shoulders square,
And his jaw was settled firmer and his body tense and set,
Boding ill for any German that my Uncle Samuel met.

“Darn,” said Uncle Sam profanely, “I’ll show them a thing or
two,
And I’ll put them where they ought to be, before I’m half way
through,
Thought they’d ketch me nappin’, that I couldn’t turn a hand?
Well, I’ll fool the pesky critters who preside for Kulturland!

Yes, I know I'll have my troubles gettin' started, for you see
There is bound to be dissension in a mixed-up family
Such as mine. But don't you worry, we'll be ready when it's
time

And we'll do our bit for Liberty in each and every clime!
Though I'm uncle to all races, black and white and red and
brown,

I'm betting not a mother's son will stoop to throw me down!
The President—Lord bless him!—is my right hand and my
hope

And with him to point the pathway, well, nobody'll have to
grope,

For he knows the situation and exactly what we need,
Why, some fellows down in Congress act as if plumb off their
feed!

Back in seventy-six and sixty-one and eighteen ninety-eight
Men volunteered and marched away—and few of them were
late,

But things have changed a lot since then, the country ain't the
same,

And problems such that wise heads know it's time to change
the game!

The flag still flies the breezes and we'll always keep it there,
But the fairest way in reason is for each to do his share,
Show each lad his line of duty, let him carry what he can
And he'll do the task assigned him if he's any kind of man."

Then he left me. Hours after he had gone his fearless way,
I woke to hear the robin sing his morning roundelay
From the tree outside my window, as he finished, off he flew,
But the funny dream persisted and I give it here to you.

THANKSGIVING

Displayed with vegetables and pies,
A sight to ruin youthful eyes,
Reposed a turkey, brown and hot,
A royal dish. And there John "sot"
And gaped, and heard, "Now John don't try
To eat the dumplings with your eye.
Just wait till pa can pass your plate,
You act as though you never ate!"
How John would blink and hang his head
Until ma laughed at him and said,
"Well, pa, I guess John can have his."
And my! How Johnny's spirits "riz"!

Thanksgiving? Sir, it's just the day
To cheer me up, to make me gay.
It substitutes a grin for tears
And sends me hurdling o'er the years.
Old friends come back to shake my hand,
A genial smile lights up the land,
I jump, I dance, I shout, I sing.
Thanksgiving? Sir, it's just the thing!

Sometimes November fails to do
Its very best for all of you,
Yet all the other months combined
Cannot give us the joy we find
Thanksgiving day. So let's be glad
And make this one the best we've had!

THE CALL OF THE SEASON

There's a little brook rolling through meadow and wood,
I can hear as I chat,
And the snow and the ice melt away—as they should—
And you're knowing all that,
There's a calendar up on the old kitchen wall,
With twelve months upon it, and out of them all
It's April I'll swear by and stand by or fall—
Are you with me, Kid Pratt?

Let's forget for an hour there's war in the land,
Let us banish black fear!
Let's go out with a rod and a line in our hand,
Where the water runs clear,
Through the afternoon sunshine or early morn fog,
We can scramble through brairs or wade in the bog,
And stumble our way o'er the moss covered log,
Sandy, Man do you hear?

The days have been cold and the Spring's misbehaved,
Soon will come the warm sun!
And when earth by soft rains is caressingly laved,
Then the strippers will run!
Then we'll pack what we need in the back of a team,
And we'll drive the old mare to the head of a stream,
And we'll fish to the edge of the evening star's gleam,
With a sigh when it's done!

BILLY GOES TO FRANCE

“As a rule I’m not a talker and I keep things to myself,
Staying mostly in the background, laid away upon the shelf,
But there’s times when I just simply have to speak what’s on
my mind,
And I’ve picked you for a list’ner, if you’ll sit there and be kind.

We were sittin’ in the kitchen, I was puffin’ at my pipe,
Jokin’ ma about the pile of supper dishes she must wipe,
When we heard the door bell ringin’ and ma said I’d better go,
For it might be company comin’ and she wasn’t dressed to show.

Now it only took a minute but I pondered as I went,
Could it be the landlord? No, for I’d paid the monthly rent,
And we had no expectations of a visitor last night—
Yet I did a heap of thinkin’ while those seconds took their
flight!

For our only boy’s at college, and I’ve worried quite a bit,
Since we got into this trouble—and at night ma’s apt to sit,
In the small old-fashioned rocker, and though she don’t say a
word,
I can tell just what she’s thinkin’, just as if I really heard.

Well, I swung the door wide open and I saw a little chap
In a blue, brass buttoned uniform and letters on his cap
And the yellow slip he gave me filled me with a vast alarm,
For I coupled it with mischief, and with sorrow, yes and harm.

I took it in and found my specs and opened it and read,
“Dear Pa and Ma. Here’s love!” And then right after that,
it said,
“Am feeling fine. Have offer to drive ambulance in France
And do my bit. I want to go. Will you give me the chance?”

I look at ma, ma looked at me—then she broke down and cried
And said she’d never let him go!—at first, I took her side,
For here we are, fast growin’ old and hopin’ he’d soon give
The joy and comfort young ones can, to make folks glad to live.

Just like the common run of lads, he wants to come and go,
And lots of nights—and early morn—we’ve heard him there
below,
A-rummagin’ in the pantry for a piece of pie or cake
And chucklin’ ’bout the playful callin’ down he’d have to take!

No, he ain’t a bit angelic, but he’s good and clean and square
In whatever he’s gone into, he’s been honest, open, fair,
And we need his happy spirits and his boyish care-free ways
And his laughter in the household, brightening up the gloomy
days.

After all, we can’t be selfish, there are other things in life
Than in seeking one’s own pleasure, so I argued with my wife,
Till at last she said if Billy-boy was bound to cross the sea,
He could go and with a blessing from his mother, and from me.

That decision, sir, will cost her sleepless nights and often pain,
And, I reckon I won’t whistle when I walk the fields again,
For I’m sending him a wire and there’s only one word, “Yes,”
And he’ll be back home to say good-bye tomorrow night, I
guess.”

They have called men to the colors and grim war is now at hand
World's Democracy 's the slogan that has stirred the dormant
land,

You and I won't live to see it, but the time is bound to come,
When there'll be no bugle calling and no rolling of the drum,

There'll be harmony and freedom and of discord not a trace,
And the world shall be a garden wherein all shall have their
place.

O, the road will be a rough one, built of human hopes and souls
And it's boys like dad's own Billy who will help to pay the tolls!

AN INTRODUCTION

Before you start for work today,
I wish you'd meet a friend of mine.

I'm honest with you when I say
That you'll regret if you decline!

He isn't of a high estate;
Financially, he's not worth while,
But you'll discover, if you wait,
He has the widest, happiest smile!

This chap of whom I write is blessed
With disposition gay and bright,
I've put him through a daily test,
He's just the same from morn to night!
Sometimes I think when he was born
God loved the blueness of his eyes,
And in the beauty of the morn
He sent him sunshine from the skies!

So, just one minute, please! I take
The greatest pleasure doing this,
Meet my friend, Gil! and, Gil please shake
With all the readers! And don't miss
A single one! I want them all
To grip your hand, to bask a while
In your companionship and fall
Before the onslaught of your smile!

No other object, he'll contend,
Is fairer than a cheerful face.
If you but grin, there'll be an end
To many troubles in your race
For daily sustenance. You'll strike
A welcome where a frown once grew,
And people whom you did not like
Will do their very best for you!

JUST A PREFERENCE

I've heard people tell of the wonderful jam
 Their mothers preserved in the fall,
How, when they were little, their stomachs they'd cram
 With jelly and doughnuts and all!
I've listened with eagerness while they have sung
 Of different dishes—they're fickle!
It's easy to see that when they were quite young,
 They never ate ma's mustard pickle!

The jam is at hand and the jelly's preserved
 In dainty array on the shelf,
No doubt all the praise they receive is deserved,
 But I'll make a choice for myself!
I'll grant they're the finest put up in the land
 And many a palate could tickle,
But I'll pass them by and hold up my right hand
 And ask for a helping of pickle!

The soft winds that blow in the springtime are there,
 The sunshine that seeps through the vines,
And the murmur of meadowy grasses I'll swear
 I catch from the green on the tines!
And the yellow will whisper of summer that fled,
 And the autumn that brought them together,
And bid me be happy and wait for the tread
 Of April and blossomy weather!

And though when I write I am risking the wrath
Of a lady I know very well,
I'll bravely establish myself in her path,
And willingly then will I tell,
The same things all over I've written for you,
The words will so easily trickle,
And form a nice tribute that's honest and true—
For ma's most beloved mustard pickle!

DAREDEVIL ZEKE

“Zeke Jones, he bot an otmobile
An’ every evenin’ at the wheel
Zeke you could see, an’ pr’haps his wife
Occasion’ly would risk her life
To go to ride. The neighbors sed
Sum night they’d bring ol’ Jones home dead!
’Fore Jones he bot that ol’ machine
A caref’ler man I never seen.
He stayed in nights and stroked the cat
An’ read his books and dozed and sat.
He saved an’ scrimped for thutty years
An’ never had no mortgage fears.
Then one fine day he took his cash,
(I don’t claim now that Zeke was rash,
Because if he had tried to drive
The car half right, he’d be alive.)
Well, as I sed, he spent his pelf
An’ bot that otto for hisself.
They showed him how to work the clutch,
To feed the gas, fix tires, and such,
Till soon he ventured out alone—
An’ timid folks began to groan!
Right after supper out would chug
Daredevil Zeke. His bounding bug
Fair whizzed along the village route
Without the leetlest signal toot
He took the left side for the right,

He never lit his red tail-light.
He killed nine dogs and one big caff
An' gave the constable the laff!
He kept it up. He thought 'twas fun
To scare old men an' make 'em run,
An' lots of them began to think
That old Zeke Jones had took to drink!
But twan't no rum nor loco weed,
'Twas just the germ of reckless speed!
Things went like that for quite a while
And Zeke he et up mile on mile,
Until one eve, at half-past eight
He hit a tree, sad to relate!
They buried him; the widow's grief
Was viewed by all with great relief,
For with old Zeke beneath the ground
The highway would be safer found!"

The moral's plain. When you go out
In touring car or runabout,
Remember that a road's no place
To stage a thrilling auto race,
Respect your neighbor's rights and pray
That he will keep out of your way.
This done, you'll be considered wise
And get a rating in the skies.

THE OPTIMIST

I care not a jot for the jumble of weather
That rides on the crest of the merciless wind,
Which treats me as if I were naught but a feather—
With each cutting blast it leaves winter behind.

The snow may be driving and dripping and dragging,
And covering sidewalks, the roofings and streets,
It wastes all its bluster! For soon will come tagging
The brightest of months with her basket of sweets.

I know that young April will weep into favor
Before her successor spreads 'round me her charms,
Why should I complain of the month's wintry flavor,
Expressing uncalled-for and crabbed alarms?

Each snowflake, that seized with abandon, goes whirling
In riotous dance to a guttery doom,
Drops not in the street, but a little brook purling
Its way through the thickets where mayflowers bloom.

The slush-covered streets turn to sun-softened courses,
The sidewalks are paths where the rabbit has run,
The snow piles are rocks, where with simple resources
I've sat in contentment and fished in the sun.

Vexations I have that will keep me quite busy,
A few of them real—but I haven't the time
To rail at the weather, until I am dizzy
With wishing myself in a friendlier clime!

Come, laugh at the weather! Don't let yourself grumble!
You'll worry yourself into trouble and bed.
It's silly to sit by a window and mumble,
And let foolish fancies get into your head!

O, chronic complainer! Look past the gray morning,
It's only a curtain that's hung for a while!
The dreary-black sky is but God's way of warning—
For back of it all is a song and a smile!

A MURMUR FROM MAINE

Potatoes sixty
Cents a peck!
The farmer holds
The public's neck!
"I may be green
As grass," says he,
"But I can make
Them come to me!"
They all can bleat
When I blow down
In high-top boots
To tour the town,
But in my jeans
When I return
I have their cash—
And scads to burn!
I don't say much,
I work the plow
In early spring,
And sweat my brow!
With industry
I fight the bug
And at the weeds
I tear and tug.
In fall I load
My carts and bin
With handsome spuds—
And how I grin!

O, I'm a rube
Way down in Maine!
I seldom see
A steam-car train.
I wear my boots
When I'm in bed
And hayseed sprouts
All o'er my head!
I seldom went
To district school,
I look and act
Like one dern fool!
Oh yes, I need
A nurse or two,
To get along!
It makes me blue
Yet when I read
Of what you pay
For my poor product
Every day,
It makes me smile
And slap my leg,
Who is the rube?
Decide, I beg!"

A CALL TO THE COLORS

You with the springy step of youth,
The stalwart frame, the fighting jaw,
What have you done to uphold Truth
And sweep aside the tyrant's claw?

You say you love the country's flag?
Then here's a chance to show it!
From valley, plain and mountain crag
Step out and let us know it!
Come, Six-feet-two of beef and brawn,
Come, Five-feet-four, be ready,
That through the land at early dawn
You'll march on, strong and steady!

You may have sailed from Erin's Isle,
Perhaps your dad before you,
In either case, I'll like your style,
'Twill take a man to floor you!
You may be Swedish, Dutch or Finn,
Polander, Jew or Russian,
It matters not—if you'll chip in
Your bit to balk the Prussian!

You love the flag. The starry square,
The colored stripes of glory,
That flying in the breezes fair
Can tell their own brave story?
So do we all! But yours the test,
Ay, yours the loyal duty,
To keep it safe o'er freedom's crest,
The nation's pride and beauty!

You with the springy step of youth,
The stalwart frame, the fighting jaw,
You will not fail the call of Truth
But smash for aye the tyrant's claw!

A FISHING TRIP

When the last salute was given and Old Glory had been raised and the marchers in divisions for their showing had been praised and the crowds began to scatter toward the garden and the hoe, we hired Henry's Hazel and 'twas trout and streamward ho! We headed for East Gardner, there to try a favorite brook, but the water wasn't deep enough to cover half the hook and the fish we saw last summer had departed—in their stead a lot of weeds and branches occupied the brooklet's bed. We tried for twenty minutes, but we spent the time in vain, though the little worm would wriggle in a manner most insane and we kept as still as mice that fear the cruel pussy cat, the temperamental trouties had gone off and left us flat.

Well, said I to Sandy Dan's, we're a couple dad-blamed fools, we've got the ammunition and we've got the finest tools, there's bait and hooks and lines and all to last a million men—but the troutsies they have scorned us and they won't come back again. I guess you're right, said Sandy, and the gloom upon his face was enough to drive the sunshine from the bright and open space, for he had had a vision wherein thirty trout were laid in gleaming rows of silver for a neighborly parade! But some wise man has said it, and I'll say it here again, that there's many a thing may come between the plans of mice and men.

We climbed the hill in silence, we were both afraid to speak, lest we raise our profane voices in harangue upon the creek, but the brown road stretched before us, we decided to forget the unpleasantness behind us, with the future to be met. Now Sandy knows the country enough to get around and we hustled toward another recollected fishing ground. Down in Whitmanville, by hemlock, good old Scrabble Hollow brook; where unselfish folk who own it have it posted, every nook! We passed the fire station with its ancient, rusty bell and I wondered what would happen if I let a good-sized yell to awake the vil-

lage confines, but I curbed my boyish whim, when the elongated Sandy swore he'd push me in the swim.

We tied Hazel to a sapling and we wandered through the brush to the vast and deep annoyance of the starling and the thrush, and two hawks that hovered o'er us seemed to stretch destructive claws, as a hint of what would happen for ignoring trespass laws. We reached the clearing's edge and Sandy told me to look out, for there might be special guardians and constables about, officious, large-starred gentlemen with whiskers on their chin, but grips of steel on collars, though their badges may be tin! Stay in the brush and hide yourself, said Sandy, then you see, the Whitmanville policemen might mistake you for a tree. We whipped the flowing rapids of the Scrabble Hollow brook, across and through and up and down our vagrant way we took. The sun was warm, the wind was fresh, the earth smelled sweet and good, the little birds kept calling from their nest homes in the wood, and butterflies of yellow and of silver and of brown, came fluttering to charm me with each beautiful spring gown. And the squirrels and the chipmunks playing leap frog over head heard me bless the little fishes and I listened as they fled.

We stayed there half an hour, but that time was wasted, too, and the air right close to Sandy was approaching baby blue, when we pulled ourselves together and we tramped a boggy field, which judging from the tendency potatoes soon would yield. We found a bridge, we cast our lines and hoped with all our might that something would attack the worm, when suddenly, a bite! And Sandy yanked and Sandy swore, the hook was black and clean and on the helpless bait can Sandy vented all his spleen. Cheer up, said I to Sandy, you've left me far behind, you've had a chance while I've been merely playing with the wind. Let me drop in and try my luck—and Sandy, good old soul, he gave me his permission to manipulate my pole.

I got a little nibble and I looked for more to come, when I heard a chugging noise as of an auto engine's hum. The young man in the chugger he was pleasant, he was nice, asking if we had permission, and we told him in a trice that we hadn't and he told us we were on a private way, whereupon we thanked him kindly and we bade him a good-day. I wanted to remain

there and to catch that sassy trout, but the wisest thing we did sir and that was promptly to get out.

Again we sought the wagon and again we kept our peace, for there are times when chattering and idle words must cease; but soon our spirits brightened with the shining of the sun and we aimed to strike another place where strippers romp and run. We wandered off the highway a couple miles or more but the day was so delightful that it couldn't make us sore. For we looked across the valleys to the misty, sun-kissed hills, with a kind of satisfaction that just fills one plumb with thrills. Forgotten were the failures of the hours that had passed as we rolled along enchanted, in the spell of spring held fast.

Then we came upon the State road, Hazel quickened pace until she brought us to an old and long abandoned cider mill. In the pond beside the ruins where we made our final stab, all we caught was conversation from a chap chock full of gab, who sarcastically told us that three trout in 14 years had been taken from the mill-pond, thereby earning three good cheers. But we fished a couple minutes just to spite the gabby soul and we dragged a brace of shiners from the deep and muddy hole, and we threw them back disgusted and we pulled our rods apart and for paths traversed and fishless then we made a running start.

True we carried home no trophies of the stream to show our friends and they jolly us for failing, but no part of it offends, for the deepest kind of pleasure lurks beneath the open sky—and some day you'll fill your basket if you try, *try*, TRY!

THE MISSED PARADE

They missed the parade! O, the broken hearts
That lie in the wake of the circus carts!
Those ponderous wagons of shining gold,
So wondrous indeed for a child to behold,
Casting a spell and an age old charm,
And filling us all with a vague alarm.
Delighted we watch while the cages pass—
Yet what would happen to laddie and lass
If the doors swung out and the beasts were free?
They'd make them a meal of the kiddies—and me!

They missed the parade! and for months before
They had prodded their parents for circus lore.
They asked about monkeys with snake-like tails,
And wondered if seals were the cousins of whales
Or only some dogs that fell into the brine
And became what they were when they started to
whine!

They asked did the elephants stay out all night,
Or if they were wrapped up all cosy and tight,
Tucked into white beds like themselves and could
dream

Of candy and peanuts and plates of ice cream?
The lions and tigers, the leopards and bears
Prowled under the cots and the nursery chairs,
Scampering 'round in the dark of the night
And giving the dreamers a terrible fright!

They missed the parade ! in the years to come,
Life's path will be rosy and fair for some,
They'll find them a wagon on which they'll ride
To fame and to fortune—because they had tried?
Because they were pluggers—or was it their luck,
Combined with a dogged persistence and pluck?
And others will dream, ever hopeful they'll wait
To find they were wrong, misdirected or late,
And the things they want most, like the circus parade
Will loom up before them and glimmer—and fade !

HI! HO!

Hi! Ho! Hi! Ho! With thirst we're near daft
Like sailor lads wrecked on a rickety raft,
Our tongues are cleaved fast to the roof of our mouth,
Sure, how can weak mortals survive such a drouth?
Hi! Ho! Hi! Ho! Ah Johnny, my boy,
That cup that you bring us is brimming with joy!

Hi! Ho! Hi! Ho! What care we for weather?
We're happy old chappy old chummies together,
Let fire bells jingle and steam whistles blow,
We're off to the country where primroses grow!
Hi! Ho! Hi! Ho! And follow us swift,
The way'll be steep—we'll be needing a lift!

Hi! Ho! Hi! Ho! It's great to be living!
For joyous companions our thanks we are giving,
For smiles and for sunshine, for warm wine that bubbles
And sends us rejoicing away from Life's troubles—
Hi! Ho! Hi! Ho! I'll give you a toast,
Then here's to the health and the wealth of our host!

AFTER LINCOLN

A world of freemen—that was Lincoln's dream
A league of brotherhood upon the earth,
Shoulder to shoulder each to prove his worth,
And have his bit of land beside Life's stream;
No potentates to rob or wreck men's hearts,
No scourging whips—but fellowship and love,
With gentle trust and faith in Him above,
Welding the universe and all its parts.

A world of freemen—that was Lincoln's dream,
And some day, think you, will it come to pass?
When some one like him stands from out the mass,
To make the multitude a striving team,
To pull away from sordid schemes of strife,
Forgetting self and crushing fierce desire,
Their souls re-kindled by a Heavenly fire,
To find the way unto the joyous life?

A world of freemen!—that was Lincoln's prayer,
Then look you now beyond the stormy seas,
To where an army hearkening to the pleas
Of ravished countries, keeps its vigil there;
Slowly but surely will that dream come true!
Although the earth be running red with blood
In time no earthly force may stay the flood
Of men of purpose with a vision new!

FIDDLER AND FAIRIES

When night comes on I watch the silver stars and dream my
dreams,
They build for me a homeland trail along the moon's bright
beams,
They bring me back to hours when oft I lay beside a stove
And listened to my father's tales from out his treasure trove.

He used to take me on his lap, he'd bounce me on his knee,
He called me loving, foolish things like "Little Bunnum Dee!"
He told me tales that made me laugh—and some that made me
cry—
Oh, there were many boys I know, not half as rich as I!

When night came on, I'd find a bag behind the bed-room door,
Inside, an object long belov'd, a fiddle—nothing more,
A fiddle that had crossed the seas, that knew a steerage crew,
A fiddle that my father played while wild the sea winds blew.

The tunes? I do not know their names, but I recall the spell
He weaved for me in boyhood years—I know he played them
well!

A fiddle, battered, broken, old—yet with enchanted strains
That brought the fairies dancing in to drive away my pains.

The fairies! Ah, the mischievous! At evening in the glen
My father told me, as he played, they dared the eyes of men,
They danced across the bogs to where the roads went winding
down
Like ribbons white, from moon-lit hills, to many a sleeping
town!

They hid behind each tree and hedge, each fence and peeked
inside

Each cottage where the good folk slept—and as the bow would
glide

Across the strings I soon forgot that I was at his knee,
But felt that I was one of them—and they were calling me!

Many a night I danced with them and many a night I sang,
And roundabout and roundabout! until—the curfew rang!
And many a night I wept because I had to leave them there,
The fairies of the violin, around my father's chair!

There is no fiddle now to fetch when soft the shadows fall,
But sweet it is, as night comes on, the old scenes to recall,
I like to think again some day I'll find the little stove,
And he will play and tell the tales from out his treasure trove!

ANOTHER FRIEND GONE

Another friend gone! Ay, early or late
There comes the call to the farther gate,
The sorrow and heart-ache, sighs and tears,
The burdens borne through the bitter years
Vanish—and who of us shall not say
He has found in death a diviner day?

Another friend gone? Then it's this I crave,
Reward for the service of love he gave,
For sacrifice made in the day and night,
For babes he brought to the wondrous light,
For kindly words and the pat on the back
To the stumbling man on Life's hard track,
For these and more—and who shall not say
He has earned his part of the Father's pay?

Another friend gone! Then peaceful his rest!
Happy his journey to isles of the bless'd,
Golden the fields of the land he may find,
Peopled with folk as warm-hearted and kind,
Give him sweet solace, please God, in Your way,
Your love and Your mercy, for ever and aye!

THE SALT OF THE EARTH

Up there where angels keep the book, they write down every name,

The poorest and the richest, the obscure, the known to fame,
And some are cast in letters made of silver and gold,
And others marked in sombre black, for so I have been told.
The princes of the palaces, the humble of the huts,
All, all are duly writ therein, who run in earthly ruts,
And we are taught, and we believe, that when we reach the end,
Our record will be registered, with little chance to mend
The lives we leave behind us. There'll be much for us to tell
And perhaps a path to glory if they think we have done well!

And I'm thinking that the guardian who takes his pen in hand
Will write the Doctor's name, in glowing characters that stand
Beneath a caption that shall read, "They Are the Salt of Earth,
And Heaven their Inheritance, for they have proved their
Worth!"

TO MR. SELFISH STAY-AT-HOME

He does not have to fight, this chap, he eats three squares a day,

Each week he gets an envelope filled with substantial pay,
He has a roof above his head, a shelter from the snow
And comfortably he lies in bed the while northeasters blow.
He wears good clothes, he can afford to smoke or take a drink—
His name is Selfish Stay-at-Home. Unlucky? I don't think!

He is a man I'm sorry for—his worries are immense!
The cost of living is enough to rid him of his pence,
No loads of coal are driven up beside his cottage door,
(He has a couple tons concealed beneath the kitchen floor).
He howls because he cannot get some sugar for his tea,
He doesn't stop to think of folk who starve across the sea!

I know how tough it is for him, his wife and children all,
How economic he must be in order not to fall.
How closely he must guard each coin, how wisely he must spend
His earnings so that credit with the grocer will not end.
I know all these, and so do you—and yet if he won't give,
Some day he may ask Kaiser Bill to let his family live!

Indeed he has my sympathy—this man who cannot fight,
Misfortune seems to dog his steps, it hardly seems quite right
That he should be so badly used, while others better fare,
For instance those in olive drab in battle “over there.”
Compared with them, you will admit, his treatment is a shame,
Somebody should investigate and find who is to blame!

You are familiar with the cause, its mission is quite plain,
The Red Cross is the healing balm—like sunshine after rain—
To wounded bodies, tired hearts and weary souls that near
That port to which we all must go—with them, there is no fear!
God knows 'tis little that they ask. Come! selfish interests toss!
And cheerfully donate a bill to help the brave Red Cross!

THE TOP OF HER LIST

She's buying Christmas presents in the same big-hearted way,
She has planned some new surprises for the kids on Christmas
day,

There'll be books for little sister and a sled for sturdy John,
And a regular slate for Buddie he can draw real pictures on!
There'll be skates and tools and candy hanging on a tinsel tree
In a wondrous, dreamed-of setting to arouse the wildest glee,
And the noise will rouse the household and the households all
around

Will awake and all their clamor till the neighborhoods resound
With the cheers of happy children—and she won't be so forlorn
With the little ones who love her making merry Christmas
morn!

She's buying Christmas presents—and there's one who tops the
list,

When the kids are romping madly he'll be one who will be
missed.

The oldest of the family, one of whom they are most fond
Who will eat his Christmas rations in a village 'cross the pond,
Who was young enough to stay here, but was man enough
to go,

Didn't really think they'd need him, but he thought they might,
you know!

Thought the way the thing was going that perhaps there'd be
a chance

To do something for his country—and there was! He went to
France.

So she's buying Christmas presents—and that youngster heads
them all,
Why, she started thinking of him in the early part of fall.
And she spent her money wisely for the things she thought he'd
need,
With a bit of home-made sweet-meats and a box of favorite
weed,
And she bought them in good season and she packed the box
with care,
With the hope that he would have it Christmas morning over
there.

She's buying Christmas presents and of course she's not alone,
For throughout the land good mothers have provided for their
own,
And the folks who have no laddies or a brother in the fray,
Know the sacrifice they're making—and a large part of their
pay
From the daily grind is going into gifts that will bring cheer
To the best blood of the nation when the holiday draws near.

Yes, she's buying Christmas presents cheerfully as in the past,
With a string of love bound 'round them that through all the
years shall last,
And the gifts that make the journey in a transport's musty hold,
To a lonesome boy at Christmas greater far will be than gold!

* * * *

*And after all is said, as one friend to another
Who is a better pal to a boy than his own mother?*

THE PLAYER OF PRANKS

Up in a little old hill town where they rise in the early morn
To feed the cows and horses and scatter the chicks their corn,
Where they're done with the toil of harvest, resting up until
spring,
And taking the dragging winter months in which to have their
fling,
There's a constable, painter of houses, farmer and all-round
man,
A jack of all trades, I take it, who jokes as much as he can,
Roughing it now, if need be, and if need be, gentle and good,
And walking the church aisle Sunday as a worthy villager
should,
Making the pathway brighter because of his wish to smile,
But finding it hard to do so now, as he will for a long, long
while!

For overseas in the trenches, in the gases and grime and mud,
Where the smoke is clouding the sunlight and the dew a mixture
of blood,
Where the Hand-Men of Hell have crowded the angelic host
from sight
And death stalks forth in the morning, nor pauses to sleep at
night,
There's a youngster of his who's keeping the faith that his
grand-dad kept,
One of the many million boys who swift to the colors swept
When the call of an April morning came—and the country's
trails
Were choked with a nation's loyal lads—for America never
fails!

Yes, up in the little old hill town where they rise in the early
morn

He's playing his pranks as he always has, but I know he's a mite
forlorn;

A rough old constable-painter, who talks of his boy with pride
And tells of the letters that come to him from over the other
side.

And he's bought him a service flag, crimson and white and blue,
With a single blue-bodied star to show that his boy is fighting
for you.

A rough old constable-painter, but one of a race of men,
And I hope with all of my heart and soul that his boy comes
back again!

WITH THE ROSES

I know a garden where pink roses grew,
Killarney roses of the rarest kind,
That nodded sweetly when the south wind blew,
And seemed in everyone a friend to find.
I saw them every morning in their bowers,
And others felt, I'm sure, the same as I,
That Life was good and sweet those summer hours,
And breathed their thanks that they might pass them by.

The roses now are gone, the garden's bare,
The stems long since have withered and decayed,
The frost has brought its chilling presence there—
Ah! how I wish the roses might have stayed!
And yet I know that in the coming Spring
The cold will flee and slender shoots appear,
Then June, and all the joys the flowers bring
Under a sky that's deep and blue and clear!

Thus, little woman, there will come the time
When, like my roses he'll come back to you,
Weary from fighting in a foreign clime,
Eager to find you waiting, brave and true.
He will be looking for the old-time smile,
He will be hungry just to hear you sing,
Just like my roses! Gone a little while!
Then home, please God! And may it be in Spring!

TO A MOTHER

They've called your boy! Through the long day
 You find the house so lonely and so still,
Though in the yard the neighbor's children play
 And scream their games, as thoughtlessly they will.

You do not hear or mind, you only know
 The boy you cuddled and the boy you kissed,
And rocked to slumber in the sunset glow,
 Has marched away! And, O, how he is missed!

There is no cheery whistle up the street,
 Nor quickened step upon the narrow stair,
And sounds as of the tread of marching feet
 Do not deceive! You know he is not there.

The day goes by, autumnal shadows fall,
 Across the valley lights begin to gleam,
Weird pictures form upon the papered wall,
 And darkness brings an ending to your dream.

I know your dream! It just concerns a boy
 Who comes back home to hold you in his arms,
His duty done—then yours and his the joy
 To be together, after war's alarms.

“And darkness brings an ending?” Ah, but no!
 Your dream shall come again, with each new day,
And since your love and faith deserve it so,
 May both the dream and boy return—to stay!

THE FORTUNATE KIDS

The kids who live on our street,
They soon tire calling names
At each other, and the time comes
When they've had enough of games,
Then they gather at the corner,
Where they formulate a plan
For the regular weekly visit
With the old Grand Army man.

The kids who live on our street,
They're the luckiest I know,
Other boys must read of battles
To find out if things are so;
They depend on books and pictures
To learn how the fights began,
They don't get the first hand stories
From an old Grand Army man.

The kids who live on our street,
They delight to hear him tell
Of the day when he enlisted,
How he fought with Grant a spell;
They can see the old lips quiver
As his care-worn face they scan,
And it makes them feel like crying
With the old Grand Army man.

The kids who live on our street,
From the mountains to the sea,
They have smelled the smoke of conflict
In defeat and victory,
They have watched his comrades falling
In red rivulets that ran,
Making crimson cloaks of glory
For the old Grand Army man.

The kids who live on our street,
They will grow up tall and strong,
All will take their worldly places,
Most of them where they belong;
They will meet life's hardships bravely,
And when they complete their span,
They'll be thankful for those hours
With the old Grand Army man.

SAFE IN PORT

In the port of a little Spanish town on the coast of a far off sea,
There's the second mate of a sunken ship who had bidden good-
bye to me,
Had bidden good-bye, but not for aye, for he said that he'd soon
be back,
And he gave me a grip with a strong young hand and was off
for the wavy track!

Off for the wavy track and thickening clouds of mist,
O, it's a call for resolute men that he never can resist!
Mist and a ship that rolls, mist and a starland bright—
And God, who is watching o'er him, keeping him safe
tonight!

Bravely he sailed for the land of France full knowing what lay
before,
He had smelled the scent of a submarine—and he said that he
wanted more,
I asked, suppose that your ship went down, would you fear for
your life and limb?
And he told me then with his sunny smile, if there wasn't a boat
he'd swim!
Well, the days went by and we didn't hear, though we knew
when the ship was due,
And his mother oft in her little room would pray for the roving
crew,
And about the time that he should be home we heard that his
ship was lost,

With twenty survivors safe in port and the rest on the wild seas
tossed.
They gave no names and they told no more, we sought for the
news in vain,
And the days and nights that followed slow brought nothing but
fear and pain.
Hours in which there was little sleep, much hoping and silent
prayer—
Then the cable came from the port in Spain to tell that their boy
was there!

* * * *

Now he isn't akin to me, you know, lest it be in a broader sense,
But a friend of mine, so I guess that I could share in his dad's
suspense,
And I know that the nation feels the same for a lad and the
folks at home,
And glad that he's spared to sail again through the spray of a
friendly foam!

It's off for the wavy track and thickening clouds of mist,
O, it's a call for resolute men that he never can resist!
Mist, and a ship that rolls, mist and a starland bright—
And God, who is watching o'er him in a port of Spain
tonight!

THIS THANKSGIVING (1917)

It cannot be the same, of course, this year,
 There will be feasting in a quiet way,
She will be thankful to Him for the cheer
 Blessing her table this Thanksgiving Day.
There will be things to occupy her mind,
 And of them all her boy is uppermost,
There on the battle-line for all mankind
 Her spirit guides him at his lonely post.

Of course it will not be the same this year,
 He'll be away—except within her heart—
Because he asks, she will not speak of fear,
 And steels herself that she may do her part.
And so she works, and working, ever prays,
 And prayer supplies the strength her frailness needs,
To help her through the darkness of the days,
 Waiting for word from him and of his deeds.

And so it will not be the same this year,
 He will be missed from his accustomed place.
His mother, as she toils, will hide a tear
 And wish that she could see her soldier's face;
But she is brave and will not show her grief,
 She'll smile and be as gay as any there,
For she has faith, and with that faith belief
 That he'll return to fill the vacant chair.

A CHRISTMAS BOX FOR CY

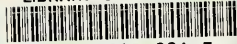
They packed a Christmas box for Cy,
A Christmas box crammed full of stuff!
The chums to whom he said good-bye,
They could not seem to buy enough!
The regulations made them cease
With seven pounds—yet Cy will grin
And dreams of home and scenes of peace
Will all be his, when that comes in!

They packed a Christmas box for Cy,
And overseas it soon will go,
To bring a glad light to his eye
And loving thoughts of them, I know.
With haste he'll tear the strings away
To find the gifts his friends have sent,
In that far land on Christmas day—
And God is good!—he'll be content.





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